

IMAGEN OF Boulder County

Issue #3

March 2006

Fundraiser for Roni Autobee

Researched by Jackie Martinez Wells and Tony Tafoya



At the American G.I. Forum in Denver for a fundraiser for Roni Autobee. LEFT TO RIGHT: George Autobee, Roger Molinar, Roni Autobee, Joe Davalos.

The American G.I. Forum was the site of a fundraiser held on February 26, 2006, for Veronica (Roni) Autobee, former Executive Director of National Image, Inc. Roni suffered a stroke in January leading to complications that required amputation of her left hand. Insurance didn't cover the full cost of a hand prosthesis, so friends and family sponsored the successful fundraising event in Denver.

Roni served as Executive Director of National Image in the mid 1990s and prior to that served many years as a Special Assistant to the Executive Director, the National President and the National Board of Directors. She was at the center of all major Image activities, including national training conferences, national membership conventions, board meetings, and endless fundraising. She played a vital role in the successful fundraising effort for the Bernie

Valdez Hispanic Heritage Center located in Denver on West Colfax and Speer Boulevard. In addition, Roni was a career volunteer for the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and other non-profit organizations.

Image was well represented at the fundraiser with the attendance of Region 8 Director, Joe Davalos and Denver Chapter President, Roger Molinar. Other past members in attendance were Sandy Romero and Paco Flores. The Denver Chapter and individual members contributed nearly \$500.

Image members are asked to keep Roni and George Autobee in their thoughts and prayers. This remarkable couple has given of themselves to the total community and the Latino community in particular. It is fitting that now that Roni finds herself in need that we respond with generosity.

In an interview conducted on March 7th, Roni stated that she grew up in Pueblo, Colorado and graduated from Central High School in 1969. She attended Southern Colorado State College and moved to Denver in 1978 where she began her community activities in earnest. She volunteered with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce for 20 years to encourage Latinos to be entrepreneurs. She coordinated the Hispanic Ski Fiesta to encourage Latinos to go up to the mountains and ski with the tourists. She continues to serve on the interview committee for Colorado senators from both political parties for all the military academies.

Roni states that these activities have helped at risk kids get their lives together.

From 1992 to 1998 she worked for the Image National Office. She was hired by Tom Gomez as an Administrative Assistant. She described this job as a hard one, but that it was made easier because the National Treasurer, Joe Davalos was also in Denver. During this time she worked for four years on making the Bernie Valdez Hispanic Heritage Center a reality. When Tom Gomez left the Image presidency, Roni became the Image Executive Director. She stayed until 1998 when she had to leave to take care of her son Don Juan. He died in 2001 of Multiple Sclerosis.

She spoke lovingly of her son and of her nephew who is now 40 and has Down syndrome. She is glad to see that kids with disabilities are no longer seen as needing to be institutionalized. "They can bring much love and happiness to the world," she said.

Of her personal journey with a disability, she said that on the 2nd of January she and her husband, George, were having breakfast at the Village Inn. She felt faint and could not focus and went to the waiting area where she started slurring her speech. She couldn't walk and her face ached. George rushed her to the hospital and the doctors discovered she had suffered a stroke caused by a blood clot. The clot restricted blood flow to her left hand and by the 10th of January the doctors had no choice but to remove her hand at the wrist. She left the hospital on the 18th of January without her left hand but glad to be alive. Since then she has worked to straighten the face muscles and her memory is returning. She has made inquiries with various companies that fit prostheses. One French company makes a cosmetic hand but it can't be manipulated. Roni insists she needs the use of her hand and is inclined to seek out a hook. Either one will cost about \$10,000 and the insurance will only cover

half the cost. After the fundraiser, she still needs about \$1000 to meet the up front payment. She still has to go to therapy three times a week to shape her wrist so that she can be fitted with the prosthesis. Through all this Roni has not lost her sense of humor. Before the fundraiser she developed an eye infection and went to the emergency room. She asked for an eye patch and a hook for her hand because she was going to a theme party in her honor. It was gratifying to see that over 200 attended and no one asked why she was wearing those dark sunglasses.

When asked about the youth, she said that she would like to see more boys and girls involved in the Image military service ceremonies. "Our youth could learn by participating in drills and by serving at military funeral services," she said.

She stated that the current xenophobia was crazy and that Image should work to help Latinos from other countries become citizens and oppose those who put up obstacles.

She said that she has always been an advocate for working with the African American community and that Image and Blacks In Government should join forces and work together to improve working conditions, civil rights and education. Federal agencies should be pressed to give more scholarships and more meaningful MOUs should be established. She said that working together Image and BIG could accomplish a lot of good things.

Those wishing to contribute to the ongoing fundraising effort are asked to send contributions to: Roni Autobee, 10495 W. 23rd Avenue, Lakewood, CO 80215

**In Unity there is strength,
communication and progress**

Publisher's Notes from Colorado, National Image and Around the Country

- ♦ To View the Denver *Noticiero* online go to <http://eeo.boulder.noaa.gov>. Click on Employment.
- ♦ **May 14-21, - 2006 National Image Training Conference. Theme, *Education, Commitment and Leadership, Making a Difference in our Nation*. To be held at the Hyatt Regency, N.W., 122 N. 2nd Avenue, Phoenix, AZ. For more information visit www.nationalimageinc.org.**
- ♦ Message from Joe Davalos, Director, Region VIII, National Image, Inc.:

Joe continues to forward the *Imagen* newsletter to all the National Image Regional Directors nationwide.

Joe responded to a call from the mother of a female student at Ft. Lupton High School. The student does well in school and is a cheerleader. She got in an off school fight with a non-Hispanic girl who is a manager/coach on the wrestling team. According to the mother, her daughter was suspended from school for a week, got a ticket from the police for disorderly conduct and has to go to court in March. She was dismissed from the cheerleading squad. The mother inquired at the school and was told the other girl would receive the same punishment. This however did not happen because the other girl was able to participate in the boys state wrestling tournament. Joe referred the issues to Padres Unidos who has a good track record in taking on education issues at the high school level. Joe also provided information on the US Dept of Education, Office of Civil Rights.

LOCAL EVENTS IN BOULDER

A Boulder County Image membership meeting was held on March 8th at the David Skaggs Research Center in Boulder. The March meeting was a pot luck lunch/meeting from 11:30 to 12:30.

The first planning meeting for the Metro State Career Exploration Fair was held on March 8th. This Career Expo is intended to expose students to the various career fields possible with federal government agencies.

REMINDER: Image still has an opening for the position of Secretary.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Tony Montoya, Director of Affirmative Action/Diversity, Colorado State University-Pueblo requests candidates for the following:

Director of Budget and Finance/University Controller. This person will report to the Vice President of Finance and Administration.

The position is to provide leadership to and direction for administrative units in Budget, Business Financial Services, Student Financial Services, Auxiliary and Athletic Business Services, Procurement Services, Grant management and Reporting and Analysis.

Start Date is as soon as possible.

Materials should be submitted to:

Colorado State University—Pueblo

Office of Vice President for Finance and Administration

2200 Bonforte Boulevard

Pueblo, CO 81001

For more information call Tony Montoya 719.549.2521

The following are excerpts/quotes from notes taken on February 8, 2006, by Gil Sandate, Library of Congress, on a meeting convened by LULAC, NPRC, and ASPIRA to address in a more concerted manner the issue of under-representation of Hispanics in the federal government.

The NHLA Chair, Ronald Blackburn Moreno, made a commitment to work on this issue and to begin addressing it on a more consistent basis, making it a major initiative over the next few years.

Over 40 attendees discussed a strategic plan of action which would be under the NHLA banner so that all organizations and federal employees could support and help implement the plan.

Key points include the following:

Media Strategy

1. Prepare media strategy and press conference around the GAO report due in May/June 2006.
2. Develop message; change language from semantics of discrimination to cultural divide; get everyone on the same page; speak with one voice; don't use an attack and retreat strategy; stay focused, persistent, consistent.

Communication Strategy

1. Obtain commitment from White House to address Hispanic employment.
2. Establish partnership with African-Americans, i.e. Blacks In Government.
3. Prepare agency Hispanic employment profiles and hold meetings with agency leadership.

Congressional Strategy

1. Request Congressional hearings after the GAO report is issued.
2. Prepare Legislative proposals to fix broken Federal personnel hiring system.
3. Address the challenge of leadership accountability.

4. Link performance in Hispanic employment to rewards (program budget and bonuses).

Research and Assessments Strategy

1. Collect plans from the different agencies to develop overarching agenda.
2. Determine challenges, i.e. no funds to do base activity-work.
3. Determine opportunities.
4. Evaluate systemic institutional barriers, i.e. legal case history interpretations.
5. Examine discrimination suits—reverse discrimination suits.
6. Examine past work to determine what didn't work, i.e. MOUs are not being applied.
7. Find out how many Latinos apply by agency.

Infrastructure

1. Organize smaller committees to create specific recommendations
2. Establish the NHLA Advisory Commission of Federal Retirees to capitalize on retiree expertise.
3. Develop training on federal personnel process to better educate ourselves about hiring practices—use federal retirees.
4. Ensure follow-up.

Assignments were made to individuals and to organizations to ensure that the strategic plan does not lose momentum. Gil Sandate will keep Image members informed as the process develops.

The Goals and Objectives of Boulder County Image

- A. To seek a broad development and expansion of employment opportunities for the aspirants among the Latino population.
- B. To assist and encourage the government services in providing the best possible circumstances for the recruitment, training, employment and advancement of Latinos.
- C. To encourage and actively support the promotion and advancement of Latinos already employed.
- D. To counter employment issues based on social, ethnic, religious, age and gender discrimination, direct or indirect.
- E. To analyze and determine the educational and professional needs of Latinos seeking entry and advancement in employment; and, whenever possible, provide appropriate training and counseling services to meet these needs – particularly among the youth.
- F. To establish and continually upgrade a broad basis of communications with Latino employees across the nation.
- G. To respond to the reasonable requests of non-members and groups whose problems, goals, and objectives are supportable within the By Laws of Boulder County Image.
- H. To enhance the promotion of ethnic pride, culture, and camaraderie through the organized and regular social gatherings which will serve to bind members together.
- I. To provide a non-partisan platform on major issues of local and national significance so that members may be better informed and may express their views.
- J. To expand the concept and objectives of National Image, Inc., to communities throughout the United States to provide maximum impact on the benefits derived from the pursuit of these goals and objectives as stated above.

Key Committee Functions

The key functions performed by Boulder County Image officers and members of standing committees include: **Advocacy on Employment and Education Issues; Membership and Outreach;** and **Consultation**. The President of Boulder County Image will assign members on an ad hoc basis as the need arises. The following is a brief description of each function:

Advocacy on Employment and Education Issues

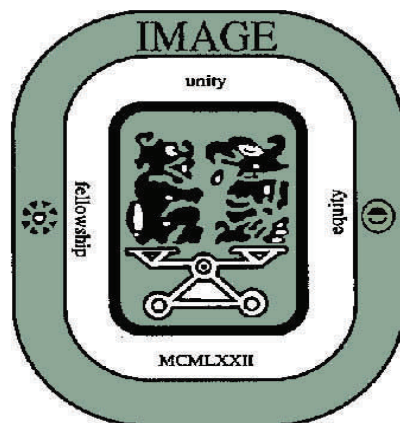
The advocacy function is performed when members take a pro-active role in seeing that a client's issue is addressed by the appropriate community, education or government organization. This function typically involves the following: Mediating an issue at the lowest level before it escalates; Negotiating issues on behalf of clients; Assisting local businesses with employee issues; Assisting students and parents with local school issues, e.g. fighting, drop out, and equal treatment policies; Educating the community on Latino issues; Researching legal information (not advice) on various employment topics; Accompanying clients (employees and applicants) and serving as their representative. Boulder County Image will monitor civil rights issues in the community and provide a community service by organizing Latinos and educating them on issues.

Membership and Outreach

The membership committee is charged with an ongoing program of recruiting and retaining members. This committee coordinates a yearly membership drive for new members. The outreach function is performed by going out into the community to explain Image programs and communicating the assistance that can be provided. Typically, this function involves attending meetings and briefings, networking with agency representatives, providing orientation briefings to newcomers, attending training sessions and education workshops - both as participants and presenters.

Consultation

Consultation services are typically provided to clients who are in need of explanations related to documents that need an interpretation and require follow up actions. Consultations are private.



***IMAGEN* is a
publication of**

Boulder County Image
#348
637-B South Broadway
Boulder, CO 80305
Phone 303.497.6439

IMAGEN seeks to inform
Latinos on employment, education
and civil rights issues.

Editor: Tony Tafoya

MISSION

National Image, Inc. was established in 1972, to address Latino concerns in employment, education, and civil rights. Boulder County Image is an affiliate of National Image, Inc. and operates in Colorado within Region VIII. Its mission is to work with federal, state, county and local government organizations and community members to improve the status of Latinos in focused mission areas.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BOULDER COUNTY IMAGE**

OFFICERS:

The following were elected as interim officers at the first meeting on July 13, 2005. They will serve while the petition to affiliate with National Image, Inc. is being reviewed.

President - Becky Rios

1st Vice President - Richard Shields

2nd Vice President - Katy Stewart

Secretary - Vacant

Treasurer - Michelle Masias

TASK FORCE CHAIRS/MEMBERS:

The following have been appointed as chairs of the standing task forces. Members will be contacted to join one of these task forces.

Social/Cultural - Michelle Masias

Education - Richard Shields

Employment - Vacant

Civil Rights - Katy Stewart

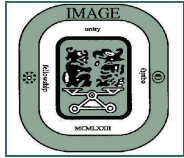
NATIONAL OFFICERS:

National President - John Griego

Region VIII Director - Joe Davalos

Colorado State Director - Tony Montoya

Special Assistant Office of the Chairman -
Ramón Montoya



Boulder County Image
#348
637-B South Broadway
Boulder CO 80305

Membership Application Form

Applicant Information (please print or type)

Name	
Home Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Employer Name	
Work Address	
City, State, Zip Code	
Telephone (business)	
Telephone (Home)	
Fax	
E-Mail	

Membership Information #3-06

Type of Membership: New _____ Renewal _____

Signature _____ Date _____

(Membership dues are \$15.00 (\$8.00 for National dues, \$2.00 for State dues and \$5.00 for Chapter.)

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